\ AID INCOMING TELEGRAM

EXCISE

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STATE FOR INM AND ARA, DEA FOR OCI, AND OFR.

E.O. 12356: NA
TAGS: SNAR, BL
SUBJ: ATMOSPHERE IN CHAPARE COCA GROWING REGION GROWS CONFLICTIVE

1. SUMMARY: THE PRESENCE OF NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS IN THE CHAPARE HAS GROWN IN RECENT MONTHS, BRINGING WITH IT AN INFLUX OF OUTSIDERS ENGAGED IN VARIOUS ASPECTS OF THE COCA/COCAINE TRADE, LAWLESSNESS, A SCARCITY OF COCA FOR LEGITIMATE USE AND OF LABOR FOR LEGITIMATE ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES. THE POTENTIAL THAT SERIOUS GOVERNMENT CONTROL MEASURES WILL BE MET WITH VIOLENCE HAS GROWN. END SUMMARY.

2. DURING TRIP TO CHAPARE FROM COCHABAMBA WITH INM PROGRAM OFFICER LANA CHUMBLEY, [redacted] OBSERVED THAT SITUATION IN CHAPARE WITH RESPECT TO TRAFFICKING IN COCA AND COCAINE HAD DETERIORATED GREATLY OVER THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS.

3. IN SACABA [redacted] REPORTED THAT FARMERS ARE NO LONGER DELIVERING ANY COCA TO THE LEGAL SYSTEM, EVENTHOUGH THE OFFICIAL PRICE WAS RAISED FROM 2000 PESOS PER TAMBOR TO 3500 IN EARLY JULY. (A TAMBOR HAS BEEN REDEFINED AS 50 POUNDS OF DRIED COCA LEAF. THE PESO IS FLOATING; DURING THE AFTERNOON OF AUG 31 IT WAS EXCHANGED AT ABOUT 250 PESOS TO ONE US DOLLAR). DELIVERIES OF COCA TO THE LEGAL SYSTEM DROPPED OFF AS EARLY AS APRIL, 1982, AND HAVE BEEN NIL SINCE EARLY JULY.

4. IN THE CHAPARE, REPORTS OF THE PRICES PAID FOR COCA ON THE BLACK MARKET VARIED FROM 7000 TO 20,000 PESOS PER TAMBOR. THE TOWN OF SHINOHOTA, ABOUT 40 KILOMETERS EAST OF VILLA TUNARI, HAS BECOME THE PRIMARY FREE COCA MARKET OF THE AREA. LARGE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE CONGREGATE DAILY AT ITS MARKET ALONG THE MAIN ROAD, MAKING PASSAGE BY VEHICLE DIFFICULT. ALL TYPES OF COMMODITIES ARE AVAILABLE. COCA IN BAILS IS READILY VISIBLE ALONG THE ROADSIDE, ALTHOUGH THE QUANTITY IS NOT LARGE SINCE THIS IS A SLACK SEASON FOR THE HARVEST OF COCA LEAF. POLICE AUTHORITIES DO NOT ENTER THE AREA FOR FEAR OF BEING ATTACKED.

5. FURTHER ALONG THE ROAD, AT IVIRGARSMA, IS THE BEGINING OF THE FOOT TRAIL INTO THE JUNGLE. COCA IS DELIVERED HERE BY THE TRUCKLOAD TO BE TRANSFERRED TO MEN'S BACKS AND CARRIED INTO THE WILDERNESS EAST OF THE SAJTA RIVER, WHERE INNUMERABLE COCAINE FACTORIES ARE LOCATED. THIS ONCE SLEEPY TOWN IS NOW FILLED WITH PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY AT NIGHTFALL. A SIDE ROAD WHICH UNTIL A FEW MONTHS AGO WAS BORDERED BY A FOREST IS NOW LINED WITH FOOD STALLS.

6. ACCORDING TO LOCAL FARMERS, MOST OF THE PEOPLE IN SHINAHOTA AND IVIRGARSAMA ARE OUTSIDERS WHO HAVE RECENTLY MIGRATED TO THE CHAPARE TO WORK IN THE COCA/COCAINE TRADE. NEVERTHELESS, IT IS REPORTED THAT SOME FARMERS HAVE BEGUN TO MAKE THEIR WON COCA PASTE RATHER THAN SELL THEIR COCA LEAF. WAGES PAID FOR A NIGHT'S LABOR STOMPING COCA IN A "FACTORY" ARE REPORTED TO BE AS MUCH AS 500 PESOS, COMPARED TO 200 PESOS A DAY PAID FOR AGRICULTURAL LABOR. LABOR -- ALWAYS SCARCE IN THE CHAPARE-- IS NOW PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO OBTAIN FOR LEGITIMATE PURPOSES. THE MANAGER OF THE DEL VALLE PINEAPPLE PLANTATION IS REPORTEDLY CONSIDERING CLOSING OUT THE OPERATION AND REESTABLISHING IN SANTA CRUZ.

7. AT THE CHECKPOINT IN PARAGTI, ABOUT HALF WAY UP THE MOUNTAINS FROM VILLA TUNARI ON THE ROAD TO COCHABAMBA, [redacted] REPORTED THAT HE HAD RECENTLY FOUND DYNAMITE PLACED BEHING HIS CHECKPOINT. HE SAID THAT THE PREVIOUS NIGHT (AUG 26) THE NARCOTICS POLICE OFFICE IN VILLA TUNARI HAD BEEN THREATENED AND THAT HE HAD TAKEN HIS MEN TO REINFORCE THE VILLA TUNARI CONTINGENT. NO ACTION OCCURRED. EARLIER, TWO OF THE THREE COCA COLLECTION SUB-CENTERS LOCATED IN CHAPARE HAD BEEN ATTACKED, ONE DESTROYED COMPLETELY

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THE GOB TO COME TO AGREEMENT ON A VIABLE COCA CONTROL PLAN TO SET THE BASIS FOR EFFECTIVE ACTION IN THIS AREA. THE EMBASSY WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH AS HARD AS POSSIBLE ON ALL LEVELS TO GET SUCH A PLAN. CORR

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8. [redacted] DEMONSTRATED SEIZED BAGS OF LIME AMOUNTING TO ONE HALF TO THREE QUARTERS OF A TON WHICH HIS MEN HAD DISCOVERED ON VEHICLES HEADED TOWARDS THE CHAPARE. THE LIME IS USED IN THE MANUFACTURE OF COCAINE. HE ALSO DEMONSTRATED TWO SEIZED TRUCKS IN WHICH COCAINE PASTE HAD BEEN DISCOVERED. (THE CHECKPOINT WAS FORMERLY OPERATED BY COCA CONTROL TO PREVENT THE ILLICIT MOVEMENT OF COCA OUT OF THE CHAPARE. FOR THE LAST THREE MONTHS IT HAS BEEN OPERATED BY NARCOTICS POLICE TO CONTROL THE MOVEMENT OF INPUTS TO COCAINE MANUFACTURING INTO THE CHAPARE AND THE MOVEMENT OF COCAINE OUT OF THE REGION).

9. COMMENT: THE TRAFFICKING NETWORKS USED TO BE ABLE TO COUNT ON RELATIVELY UNRESTRICTED MOVEMENT OF THEIR BASIC INPUT, COCA LEAF, BY ROAD TO SANTA CRUZ DEPT AND THEREFORE THEIR REFINING ACTIVITIES IN MONTERO AND SANTA CRUZ. THE COCA WAS BOUGHT AND SOLD BY MIDDLEMENT AND THE FARMER REMAINED RELATIVELY INNOCENT, SIMPLY GROWING AND SELLING HIS CROP. IN REATCTION FIRST TO THE SUCCESSFUL INTERDICTION OF THE COCA TRANSPORT SYSTEM BY COL. DORIA MEDINA AND MAJ. COSSIO FROM MID-MARCH TO MID-MAY, 1981, AND LATER TO THE OPERATIONS AGAINST THE COCAINE FACTORIES IN THE EASTERN CHAPARE AND THE ERADICATION OF COCA IN YAPACANI IN APRIL AND MAY OF 1982, THE TRAFFICKERS HAVE MOVED MUCH OF THEIR OPERATIONS CLOSER TO THE SOURCE OF THEIR PRIMARY INPUT. THE INFLUX OF OUTSIDERS INTO THE CHAPARE, AS WELL AS THE INVOLVEMENT OF FARMERS THEMSELVES IN THE MANUFACTURE OF PASTE, HAS GIVEN THE TRAFFICKERS A LARGER BASE OF SUPPORT TO OPPOSE ANY ACTIONS THE GOVERNMENT MIGHT TAKE TO CONTROL COCA OR COCAINE. ARMED RESISTANCE TO SUCH EFFORTS IS LIKELY WHEN THE GOB BEGINS A SERIOUS PROGRAM.

10. AS RECENTLY AS THE END OF MAY, FARM ORGANIZATION LEADERS ASSURED NCU CHIEF OF THEIR WILLINGNESS TO LEAD THEIR MEMBERSHIP IN A VOLUNTARY PROGRAM TO REDUCE COCA PLANTINGS, IN EXCHANGE FOR A VIABLE PROGRAM OF DEVELOPMENT AND DIVERSIFICATION. HOWEVER, THEIR ABILITY TO PURSUADE THEIR MEMBERSHIP TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE PROGRAMS IS STEADILY BEING WEAKENED.

11. FROM ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW, THE LACK OF COCA ON THE LEGITIMATE MARKET -- YUNGAS FARMERS ARE ALSO REFUSING TO DELIVER THEIR COCA TO THE GOVERNMENT -- IS CAUSING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS FOR THE GOVERNMENT. ACCORDING TO [redacted] THE MINERS HAVE THREATENED TO STRIKE IF THEY ARE NOT PROVIDED WITH COCA, WHICH THEY CONSIDER ESSENTIAL TO THEIR ABILITY TO WORK. [redacted] NOT YET DEVISED A WAY TO SUPPLY THIS BASIC NECESSITY. (IN THIS REGARD, SANTA CRUZ DAILY "EL MUNDO" REPORTED AUG 31 THAT A SPECIAL COMMISSION SPONSORED BY THE NARCOTICS COUNCIL HAD TRAVELLED TO THE YUNGAS AREA TO BUY COCA ON BEHALF OF THE MINERS DIRECTLY FROM FARMERS, BUT HAD ONLY BEEN ABLE TO PURCHASE ELEVEN TAMBORS.) THIS DETERIORATING SITUATION HIGHLIGHTS THE NEED FOR